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REPORT OF THE MENTAL DISABILITIES BOARD OF VISITORS

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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
MENTAL DISABILITIES BOARD OF VISITORS

TED SCHWINDEN, GOVERNOR

CAPITOL STATION

STATE OF MONTANA

(406) 444-3955

HELENA, MONTANA 59620

January 1985

Members of the Forty-ninth Legislature

This report to the Forty-ninth Montana Legislature summarizes the facility reviews conducted by the Mental Disabilities Board of Visitors. This report is issued in accordance with Sections 53-20-104(8) and 53-21-104(8) of the Montana Codes Annotated.

The Mental Disabilities Board of Visitors is charged by Montana Law with reviewing patient care at Montana's Community Mental Health Centers, as well as the institutions for the mentally ill and the developmentally disabled. In addition to the facility reviews, the Board has responded to almost seven hundred requests of patients and families during the last biennium to review care, treatment and protection of rights of emotionally ill and developmentally disabled citizens [53-20-104(6) and 53-21-104(5) M.C.A.].

This report to the Legislature serves to highlight the major accomplishments and deficiencies of the facilities reviewed by the Board of Visitors. The Board is hopeful that these findings will continue to strengthen the delivery of treatment services to Montana citizens. If more information is desired on any of the matters discussed in this Annual Report, please contact our office, or refer to the individual reports which are on file in the Governor's Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Allen V. Bertelsen
Chairman

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REPORT

to

THE FORTY-NINTH MONTANA LEGISLATURE

In reviewing the facilities under our purview, the Board of Visitors has documented the compliance and non-compliance of these facilities with Montana Law. Our annual report highlights the deficiencies (as required by law), as well as the areas in which excellent service has been rendered.

TREATMENT SERVICES

[53-20-101, 53-20-104, 53-20-148, 53-21-101
53-21-104, 53-21-162 Mont. Codes Ann. 1983]

Accomplishments:

The Day Treatment Programs offered by the mental health centers have significantly expanded services in the past two years. Throughout each region these programs offer socialization, therapy, work and recreation opportunities to the chronically mentally ill population.

The increased communication and coordination between Montana State Hospital and the regional mental health centers is very positive.

The level of care provided the residents at Boulder River School and Hospital and the Center for the Aged surpasses that found in most institutional settings.

Deficiencies:

There are a number of residents at Montana State Hospital and Boulder River School and Hospital who are ready for community placement. Unfortunately the limited number of group homes creates a large waiting list.

The Center for the Aged has proposed a new mission statement which would no longer identify them as a mental health facility. Changing the designation is not appropriate since the facility only accepts referrals from Montana State Hospital and community mental health centers and serves persons who are chronically mentally ill.

A resident employment program, which would train residents to develop work skills and receive payment based on their productivity is needed by many of the residents at Boulder River School and Hospital and Eastmont Human Services Center. Additional money is needed to expand this program at the Center for the Aged.

Additional group homes for the Montana State Hospital population are needed in Region I (Miles City) and Region IV (Helena).

CONSUMER ISSUES AND PATIENT RIGHTS

[53-21-101, 53-21-104, 53-21-142, 53-21-145, 53-21-146, 53-21-147, 53-21-148 Mont. Codes Ann. 1983]

Accomplishments:

Copies of client rights were posted in all of the mental health centers, Montana State Hospital, and the Center for the Aged. Patient rights documents are kept in client files at Boulder River School and Hospital and Eastmont Human Services Center.

Participation in the commodity program has aided in reducing the raw cost of food. The institution did state that the amount of commodities has reduced over the years.

Formal adoption of the Patient Grievance Procedure at Montana State Hospital is expected in 1985. Similar procedures are in place at the Center for the Aged and Region III (Billings Mental Health Center).

Deficiencies:

Consumer satisfaction surveys have not been conducted at the mental health centers in Region I, II, III or V. This data is important in assessing needs and the quality of services provided.

Waiting lists of longer than four weeks were documented in region II (Billings) and Region V (Kalispell).

The physical examination and physician progress notes at the Center for the Aged were minimal. Additional follow-up is needed on the dental care provided at Eastmont Human Services Center and Montana State Hospital.

RECORD KEEPING

[50-20-161, 53-21-162 and 53-21-165 Mont. Codes Ann. 1983]

Accomplishments:

Improvements in documentation and increased efficiency in record keeping were readily apparent in the medical records at Boulder River School and Hospital, and Eastmont Human Services Center.

Guardianship information is clearly documented in the records at Eastmont Human Services Center, the Center for the Aged and Boulder River School and Hospital.

A review of the documentation of seclusion, time-out and/or restraints at the facilities for the developmentally disabled, the Center for the Aged and Montana State Hospital indicate compliance with facility procedures and Montana law.

Deficiencies:

Discharge summaries from those units other than the Pre-release unit of Montana State Hospital are frequently dictated one or two months after a person has left the hospital. In some cases the person has been readmitted before the discharge summary has been completed.

The major deficiencies in the records reviewed at Montana State Hospital, the Center for the Aged and the five regional mental health centers are the vague, non specific, and general treatment plans and objectives.

ADMISSIONS - PLACEMENTS

[53-20-101(3), 53-20-121, 53-20-127, 53-21-101(3), 53-21-162(2), Mont. Codes Ann. 1983]

Accomplishments:

Staff from the Department of Institutions, Montana State Hospital and the community mental health centers meet quarterly to review the appropriateness of admissions and discharges to Montana State Hospital.

Referrals of developmentally disabled patients at Montana State Hospital have resulted in the transfer of six (6) residents to Boulder River School and Hospital.

Deficiencies:

Placement and treatment issues need to be addressed for those persons for whom there is no appropriate community based program. These groups include the sex offender, the brain injured person (there is only one group home available) and the developmentally disabled who are at the Warm Springs Campus who are not appropriate for placement at Boulder River School and Hospital.

Patient transfers from the Intake Unit to the Extended Treatment or Long Term Care Unit of Montana State Hospital is frequently delayed (from two weeks to over three months)

when these treatment units are filled to capacity. In addition the periodic overcrowding of the Extended Treatment Unit interfers with adequate treatment.

ENVIRONMENTAL

[53-20-104(4) and 53-21-104(3) Mont. Codes Ann. 1983]

Accomplishments:

The Board's concern regarding the lack of privacy and the overstimulating environment of the Children's Unit at the Warm Springs campus promise to be alleviated with the new facility in Billings.

The physical environment of the resident living areas of the Galen campus of Montana State Hospital, Boulder River School and Hospital, Eastmont Human Services Center and the Center for the Aged are very clean and well maintained. It was evident from the Board's review of these facilities that increased emphasis has been placed on overall maintenance and energy efficient operations.

The rennovation of the old superintendent's home at Boulder River School and Hospital has created a home-like atmosphere for eight residents. Similar living accommodations would benefit the majority of the residents.

Deficiencies:

The increased number of admissions to the Forensic Unit of Montana State Hospital reinforces the need to consolidate treatment services and staff in one building. The proposed architectural design takes into consideration issues of privacy and dignity and provides for treatment and security needs. The Board of Visitors supports the Department of Institutions in their request for funds for the Forensic Unit.

Extreme temperature variations were evident in many areas of the Center for the Aged. The air exchange problem affects the care and treatment of the residents and needs to be corrected.

The laundry service areas at Eastmont Human Services Center and the Center for the Aged are inadequate. The Board of Visitors supports funding of these projects to correct the deficiencies.

ADMINISTRATIVE - STAFF

Accomplishments:

Fee collection at all the mental health centers has

increased over the past two years. This is due to more aggressive policies and the passage of the 1983 legislation requiring mandatory group insurance coverage for mental health services.

The incentive pay program, utilized by the Region III Mental Health Center is an innovative program which should improve staff morale and productivity.

The administration at the Center for the Aged is to be applauded for the staff involvement allowed on issues affecting patient care and the operation of the Center. The implementation of the staff recommendations will result in improved services to the residents and increased staff morale. Similar staff-administration exchanges were observed in the weekly bulletins of Boulder River School and Hospital and Eastmont Human Services Center.

Deficiencies:

There are psychiatrist vacancies at the mental health centers in Region I (Miles City), Region IV (Helena) and Region V (Missoula). This has been a continuing problem and alternatives should be explored to remedy this problem.

In-service training funds for staff at the state institutions and mental health centers has decreased significantly over the past three (3) years. This is a serious problem which affects morale and ultimately professional compentence. Alternative sources of funding or means of providing in-service should be explored.

The increased population and wide variety of patients at Montana State Hospital warrants an increase in developmental staff and treatment programs. When patient treatment is limited because there is not enough staff, the length of hospitalization is unnecessarily increased.

The Board of Visitors urges the Department of Institutions to clarify the liability issues associated with the use of volunteers. There are several areas within the institutions where patients and staff would benefit from volunteers.

APPENDIX A

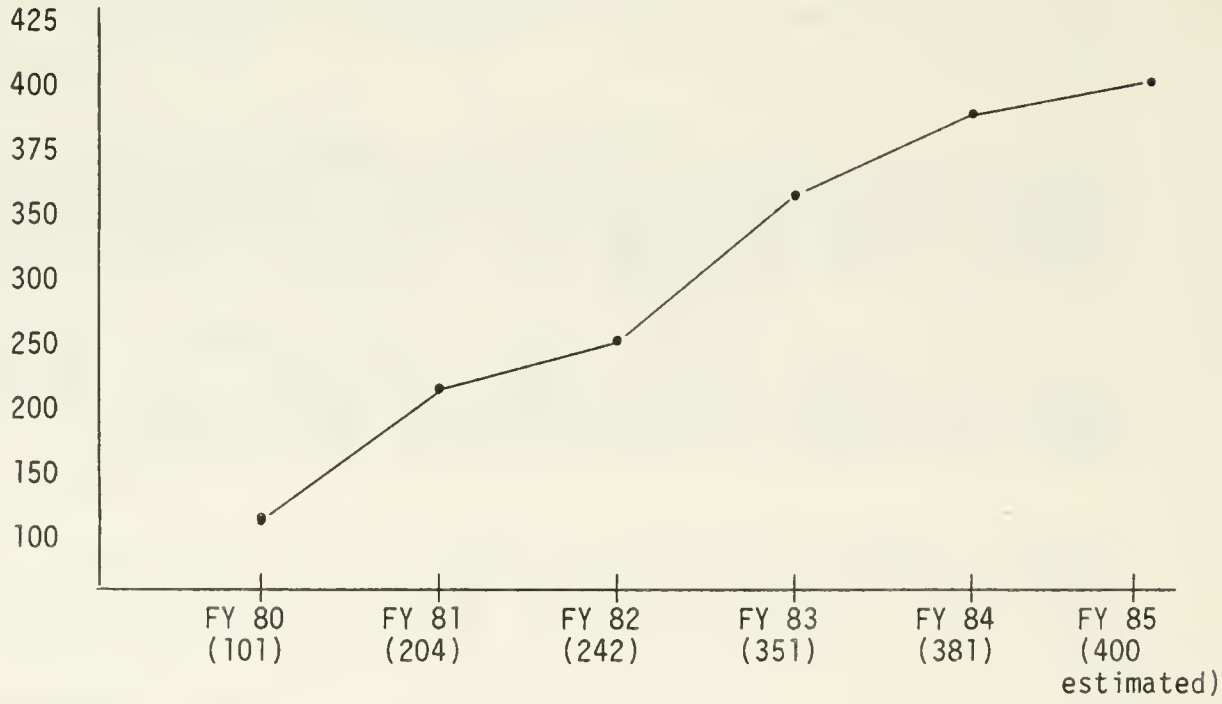
GRIEVANCE STATISTICS

Grievances filed by the Board of Visitors and requests for assistance are the best indication of the increased workload the Board has experienced since its inception.

Grievances include patient and families of patients' complaints regarding rights violations, treatment issues, commitment/re-commitment proceedings, admissions/discharges, human rights issues and questions on the use of patient funds and billings.

Requests for assistance include questions on less restrictive treatment environments, information on guardianship/conservatorship, sterilization issues, and types of programs available in various facilities.

OVERVIEW OF GRIEVANCE/REQUESTS BY FISCAL YEAR



APPENDIX B

FACILITIES REVIEWED

MENTAL HEALTH FACILITIES

Montana State Hospital (Warm Springs and Galen Campuses)

Center for the Aged - Lewistown

Montana Youth Treatment Center - Billings (Fiscal Year 1985)

Regional Mental Health Centers and their satellite offices

Region I	-	Miles City
Region II	-	Great Falls
Region III	-	Billings
Region IV	-	Helena
Region V	-	Missoula

DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES FACILITIES

Boulder River School and Hospital - Boulder

Eastmont Human Services Center - Glendive

Developmentally Disabled population - Galen Campus, Montana State Hospital

BOARD MEMBERS

Allen V. Bertelsen, Chairman

Virginia Geiger Kenyon, Vice-Chairman

Mary C. Chronister, Ph.D.

Joe DeLong

L. P. Noonan

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Kelly Moorse, Executive Secretary

Colleen Nichols, Paralegal Assistant

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